

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

PLEASE AMEND THE ABSTRACT AS FOLLOWS:

An apparatus and method for removing the spinal cord from the animal carcass during processing prior to splitting the carcass. One embodiment of the apparatus includes a catheter tube, which comprises a flexible vacuum casing having a flexible rotating shaft captured therein where a cutting bit member is attached to the tip end of the rotating shaft for breaking down the spinal tissue such that a vacuum can be applied to the catheter to aspirate the spinal cord tissue. The catheter tube can be fed down the spinal channel prior to the carcass being split and as the catheter is being inserted the cutting tip is rotated to break down the spinal tissue and a vacuum is applied to aspirate the broken down tissue. ~~Another embodiment of the apparatus for the concept of removing the spinal cord prior to splitting the carcass comprises a semi-flexible pull line or pull chain/ curly spring. The pull line comprises a stiff long non-rotating small diameter spring with a cutting head and connected thereto is a trailing long chain with differing diameter springed cutting edges. The leading edge of the long spring section of the tool is attached to a worm feed line. The method is to feed the worm feed line into the smaller diameter end of the spinal channel and as the worm feed line extends and protrudes out the neck end of the channel the line is grasped and the spring and chain sections are pulled through the channel.~~

In the Brief Description of Drawing section of the application please amend paragraphs [0019] and [0020] as shown below. A reference to Fig. 5 is added and a correction is made to the figure references.

[0019] Fig. 5 and Fig. 5a is a side view of the pull chain apparatus and a section of the pull chain respectively;

[0020] Fig. 5b is a cross section of the spinal channel ~~is a side view of a section of the pull chain;~~
and Figs. 6a-c are various tubular cutting ends.

In the Detailed Description of Invention section please amend paragraph [0041] as indicated below to add a reference to Fig. 5, Fig. 5b and provide an item number 513 for the “spinal channel’. No new matter has been added.

[0041] Referring to Fig. 5, Fig. 5a and 5b, a side view of the pull chain apparatus is shown. An automated pull chain apparatus 500 is shown. The apparatus 500 comprises a wire feed drive 502 which feeds a worm feed line through the spinal cord channel starting at the rear end of the carcass and extending downward through the front end of the carcass where the pull hook grabs the worm line and pulls the pull chain through the spinal cord channel. The drive chain 506 powers the pull hook 504 thereby pulling the pull chain completely through the spinal cord channel 513. Spray nozzles 508 spray the pull chain at a prewash station 510 to remove the larger portion of the spinal cord tissue from the pull chain. The pull chain continues through a sanitation station 512 having sanitation nozzles 514 for final sanitization of the pull chain prior to being inserted through a subsequent spinal cord channel of a subsequent carcass.

In the Detailed Description of Invention section please amend paragraph [0042] as indicated below to correct the reference from Fig. “5b” to Fig. – 5a –. Further the claim language recited in the claims “spiral cutting head implement” is properly added to the detailed specification with an appropriate item number 520. No new matter is added.

[0042] Referring to Fig ~~5b~~ 5a, a side view of a section of the pull chain is shown. A blown up view of the pull chain is shown. The pull chain is shown with springed cutting tools or spiral spring cutting head implement 520 spaced along the length of the chain and the springed cutting tool has a spiral configuration of varying diameter. The pull chain can also be inserted and pulled through manually.

In the Detailed Description of Invention section please amend paragraph [0043] as indicated below to insert the claim language recited in the claims “spiral cutting head implement” to properly add to the detailed specification with an appropriate item number 520. No new matter is added.

[0043] The concept utilizes a stiff non-rotating long small diameter spring with a bullet/cutting head. Using a worm feed to insert the spring, it would be fed into the smaller diameter end (bung end) and as it protrudes out the neck end, grab the spring and allow the line to pull the spring through. The idea is to feed a spring through and have an attached chain about the same length with several differing diameter springed cutting edges of the spiral spring cutting head implement 520 on the trailing piece. What doesn't get taken out with the fed spring would be chewed up and dragged out with the second section.